

Code 04ME61W
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Sample Copy

CHECK ONES THAT APPLY IN EACH GROUP:

Previous Michigan
Blue Ribbon School:

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, year(s) 1996-1997

Education YES Grade:

 A B

 NG*

*(See Worksheet)

2004-2005 Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Certification Sheet

Name of Principal Mr. Michael Horn

(Specify: Ms, Miss, Mrs, Dr, Mr, Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Brace-Lederle World Language Magnet School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing 18575 W. Nine Mile Rd.

Tel. (248) 746-8730

Address Southfield MI 48075

Fax (248) 746-8854

City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits)

Website/URL

Email hornm@southfield.k12.mi.us

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Michael Horn

(Principal's Signature)

Date Sept. 24, 2004

Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N?A in the space.

Name of Superintendent Dr. Beverly Geltner

(Specify: Ms, Miss, Mrs, Dr, Mr, Other)

District Name Southfield Public Schools

Tel. (248) 746-8500

District Mailing 24661 Lahser Rd.

Fax (248) 746-8540

Street/P.O. Box

Address Southfield MI 48075

City State

Zip Code

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Beverly B. Geltner

(Superintendent's Signature)

Date 9/21/04

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson

(Specify: Ms, Miss, Mrs, Dr, Mr, Other) (Signature)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 3, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Paul Cooper

Date 9/21/04

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

Preparation of School Self-Assessment

Representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups (including administrators, teachers, other school staff, students, parents, and community representatives) should be involved in the preparation of the School Self-Assessment. Information about its preparation is required under F3 and is used in scoring that item in conjunction with the information requested below. List the individuals involved in preparation. If necessary, add an additional page numbered "2a."

Name	Position/Title
<u>Gloria Prosperi</u> (List Primary author/editor here)	<u>Reading Clinician</u>
<u>Michael Horn</u>	<u>Principal</u>
<u>Roderick MacNeal, Jr.</u>	<u>Assistant Principal</u>
<u>Stacey Gerwig</u>	<u>Teacher/Parent</u>
<u>Sharon Lewis</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Eboni White</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Nicole Thelen</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Josie Busbee</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Alma Deane</u>	<u>Teacher/Parent</u>
<u>Pamela Wynn</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Crystal Griffin</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Thomas Noves</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Connie Joseph</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Suzanne Crimmons</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Antoinette Durden</u>	<u>Media Specialist</u>
<u>Joi Thrash</u>	<u>Technology</u>
<u>Paulette Means</u>	<u>Speech Pathologist</u>
<u>Robin Thornton</u>	<u>Social Worker</u>
<u>William Tafelski</u>	<u>Counselor</u>

Preparation of School Self-Assessment cont.

Name

Position/Title

Kassandra Nelson

Secretary

LaSandra Garrett

Secretary

John Gleason

Day Head Custodian

Vanessa Williams

Cashier

Evelyn Podlewski

Latch Key

PART II - BACKGROUND AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

DISTRICT

1. Total number of students (PreK-12)* enrolled in the district: 10,312

2. Number of schools in the district:

<u>10</u>	Elementary schools
<u>4</u>	Middle schools
<u> </u>	Junior high schools
<u>3</u>	High schools
<u>17</u>	TOTAL

3. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$10,750

Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,500

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

4. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city
☒ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban school
☐ Suburban
☐ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

5. 5 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school

 If less than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

6. Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
K	39	25	64
1	42	52	94
2	50	38	88
3	38	48	86
4	34	32	66
5	49	47	96
6	55	51	106
Other	104	95	199
TOTAL STUDENTS IN SCHOOL			799

* Include pre-Kindergartners only if the school and/or district operate PreK programs

7. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|-----------|---|
| _____ | % American Indian or Alaska Native |
| _____ | % Asian |
| <u>93</u> | % Black or African American |
| _____ | % Hispanic or Latino |
| _____ | % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| <u>7</u> | % White |

100% Total

8. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 6 %

(This rate should include the total number of students who transferred to or from different schools between October 1 and the end of the school year, divided by the total number of students in the school as of October 1, multiplied by 100.)

9. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %
0 Total Number

Number of languages represented: 0
Specify languages:

10. Students who qualify for free/reduced priced meals: 32 %
259 Total Number

If this is not a reasonably accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

11. Students receiving special education services: 12 %
97 Number Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u>8</u> Cognitive Impairment	<u>4</u> Emotional Impairment
<u> </u> Hearing Impairment	<u>3</u> Visual Impairment
<u> </u> Physical & Other Impairment	<u> </u> Physical Impairment
<u>2</u> Other Health Impairment	<u>55</u> Speech & Language Impairment
<u>25</u> Specific Learning Disability	<u> </u> Early Childhood Developmental Delay
<u> </u> Severe Multiple Impairment	<u> </u> Autism
<u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury	

12. Describe any significant changes in the data reported in items 4-11 that have occurred during the past five years and explain why the changes occurred.

Over the past five years we changed yearly as a new grade level was added to our family. The end result was the reorganization of our K-5 school to a kindergarten through eighth grade configuration. In addition, we lost four Special Education classes and gained the middle school component.

13. Indicate the full-time and part-time staff members in each of the below categories

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u> </u>
Classroom teachers	<u>48</u>	<u>3</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>3</u>	<u> </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>6</u>	<u> </u>
Support staff	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>63</u>	<u>4</u>

14. Total number of classrooms in the school 47

15. When was the school built? 1961

Date(s) of any major renovation(s) 2004-2005

If the school has been renovated, briefly describe the nature of the renovation

PART III - SUMMARY

Brace-Lederle K-8 World Languages Magnet School is a unique educational institution located in Southfield, Michigan. Brace-Lederle has as its foundational principles: trust, kindness, support, and respect for its entire constituency. Our school community is comprised of students, parents, staff, school board members, administrators, and the community at large. The vision of the school is shared by all staff and pursued daily. Our common understanding of goals, principles and expectations encourages all within our community to function as caring, contributing, productive, and responsible citizens. Our principal has established high expectations for success which undergird the educational process set forth in our mission statement and school improvement plan through instructional leadership.

We share a clear understanding of the need to build a robust academic environment beginning in kindergarten and spiraling through the eighth grade. It is our intent to implement a research based, clearly articulated, school-wide effort. This is a comprehensive plan that encompasses mathematics, language arts, science, social sciences, and foreign languages. We integrate the content areas with the understanding that reading is a meaning making process, writing is a recursive process, and reading and writing are reciprocal processes. Active learning coupled with critical thinking skills extends throughout the disciplines. We view the learning process through a Constructivist lens and recognize the value of an interdisciplinary approach to education. This is predicated on data-driven instruction, differentiation of instruction, and empowering teachers to be decision makers. We collect and analyze data on an ongoing basis to substantiate our evidence of success. Teachers receive on-going professional development to scaffold their continued learning. They are supported in a collegial environment and given opportunities for self-examination and reflection.

A signature component of our comprehensive academic curriculum is our foreign language program. This is incorporated across the grade levels, beginning in kindergarten and extending through grade 8 (K-8). The kindergarten – third grade (K-3) program incorporates oral comprehension and fluency. As the children move into the upper elementary grades, their oral skills are transferred to a written format. After completing the middle school program they should have the capacity to communicate in their foreign language. Further, children who complete the program, have an increased opportunity to bypass initial freshman coursework and place into the accelerated high school program.

We recognize and value the ideals of equity, diversity, fairness, and inclusiveness as integral parts of our learning community. The essential dynamic embedded in this thinking is that these are critical elements that foster the development of citizenry and authentic educational opportunities. These elements are an interdependent part of our vision and are continually revisited and refined, forming a road map that guides us in our endeavors.

While we are cognizant of state standards and benchmarks, we are also aware of the need to recognize children as individuals with unique learning styles, developmental timelines, and particular needs. We make every effort not to standardize our educational process. We focus our attention on the needs of each individual student and develop an ever-changing plan to ensure ongoing academic growth. Our goal for every student is to not only learn material, but to take what is learned and apply it powerfully in real world situations as they become lifelong learners. Common planning, shared discussions, and constant evaluations have become a critical cultural element of our building, leaving each member with a sense of common standards. We are committed to educating the whole child. Our nurturing environment fosters academic success while promoting the social, emotional, and physical growth of our students. This approach results in students who are motivated to be successful learners as demonstrated in our MEAP scores.

Leadership is a key component of our success. Our administrator, Mr. Horn, has a solid vision and develops that vision through cultivating positive relationships with the staff. This is accomplished by sharing insights, concerns, and goals. With this infrastructure in place, he then brings members of the community on board, which is an essential component of our total program. As a leader, he understands how change occurs, and patiently allows the change process to develop.

Our school is located in the southern portion of our city. Currently, the enrollment is 799 students. Our student body is made up of 93% African-American children and 7% Caucasian children. It has the largest elementary population in the district. Our city is cosmopolitan in that we enjoy a diverse population with respect to ethnicity and socio-economic status. The city has a wealth of thriving businesses, including many Fortune 500 corporations.

Brace-Lederle enjoys a long history of excellence. It is one of only two schools in our district with dual accreditation: The Michigan Accreditation Program (MAP) and North Central Association (NCA). The staff and administration were selected as exemplary by the State Blue Ribbon Review Panel (1993-94). We received the National Exemplary School Blue Ribbon Award (1996-1997). We were recognized for our students' outstanding academic improvement on the MEAP and received the Golden Apple award in the year 2000. We maintain a proud tradition of high academic standards through a humanistic approach to teaching and learning. We continue our journey on the road to excellence with dignity, integrity, and the best interest of children at our core.

PART IV – VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

Brace-Lederle's Mission Statement

We at Brace-Lederle, in partnership with our community, are committed to inspiring our students in a safe, nurturing, learning environment to become lifelong learners. We will promote academic, social, and personal growth so that our students will be successful, responsible citizens in a global technological society.

Brace-Lederle's Vision Statement

We at Brace Lederle believe all children can and will learn. We are cognizant of the fact that children learn in a variety of ways. We ensure that all students have equal access to a quality and challenging curriculum. In our efforts to yield high achievement, we encourage family support and involvement. Through collaboration and communication we instill values to promote learning as a lifelong process.

As we strive to achieve our mission of ensuring that all students have equal access to a quality and challenging curriculum, we regularly seek out professional learning opportunities. We communicate with parents on a consistent basis and collaborate with peers between and among grade levels and with support staff. We use these opportunities to plan best practice methods for more effective instruction.

We are genuinely interested in the lives of our students. Our interest is demonstrated as we provide opportunities to educate them on ways to problem solve, peer mediate, and learn conflict resolution strategies. We know these are lifelong skills that will enable our students to continue to be successful, responsible citizens in a global technological society.

A. Student Focus and Support

A1. How is the school's population best described? What are the students' needs? How does the school assure that the needs of all students are met?

Our school's population can be best described as predominantly African-American, however, we do have a small percentage of other ethnic groups represented. Our student body is made up of 93% African-American students and 7% Caucasian. Currently, our school's enrollment is 799 students from kindergarten through eighth grade, as well as special education. We also have a relatively small number of English as a second language, (ESL) students.

We have a diverse population of learners who have a range of skills which span from exceeding grade level expectations to demonstrating a novice level of learning and understanding. In order to meet this multiplicity of needs, we have implemented many successful programs.

Our school is cognizant of the objectives of meeting the needs of gifted and talented students. Through testing and evaluation we identify students at each grade level that exceed standards and grade level benchmarks. For those students, we provide an enriching academic program that is challenging, accelerated, and intriguing. We offer intensive studies from kindergarten through the eighth grade that focus on the augmentation of language arts, social sciences, math, and science. These classes afford our students an opportunity to empower themselves to reach their maximum potential.

Our building has three full time special education teachers, with two full time para-professionals, a full-time counselor, social worker, speech pathologist and a psychologist. This support staff, along with the general education teacher, principal, and parents, conducts student staffings, observations, and testing to identify children in need of special services. For students identified as needing services, an IEP plan is developed, and monitored by the teachers. Most of these students receive instruction in the general education classroom, with our teachers offering best practices through differentiated instruction. In addition to regular classroom instruction, extra support is given in content areas when needed. This allows students to work within their capabilities, and increase their self-esteem as they experience success.

A2. What nonacademic services and programs are available to support students, and how do they relate to the student's needs and school goals identified?

In an effort to reach our students' needs and goals, we provide a number of nonacademic services and programs. Some of the aforementioned programs are described below. Morning and afternoon latchkey is a service that provides care for our students before and after the school day, for a nominal fee. kindergarten latch key (K Club) is a similar program offering enrichment and designed specifically for the kindergarten students to have care before and after their scheduled kindergarten day. Tutoring services are provided by a number of our certified teachers. Reproductive health classes assist our students in understanding changes they may be experiencing as they grow older. The after school learning center offers youngsters opportunities to develop life skills such as cooking and sewing. The service learning program allows students of various grade levels to work together to provide services to the community. Our diversity program is a school-wide effort celebrating the differences of our community through cultural and performing arts experiences. The Crisis Prevention Team creates plans to ensure the safety of our students and staff in the event of an emergency. The Service Squads are students who monitor hallway behavior at various times throughout the day. Safety Patrol members assist children at arrival and dismissal times.

We are committed to educating our students in a safe and nurturing learning environment. In the Drug Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program, our fifth grade students and teachers work closely with local law enforcement officials. The officers come into the classroom and offer instruction on the adverse affects of drugs and violence. A similar program has been designed to meet the needs of our middle school students. This diverse program is unique in its ability to bring together students of

various academic and social standings within and outside of the school. While building their self-esteem, they gain an understanding and respect for themselves as well as each other. In our continuous efforts to promote responsible citizens, we offer peer mediation to our student population in kindergarten through the eighth grade. In this program, peers work together on conflict resolution, positive social development, and the progression of appropriate problem solving skills.

Through our support staff a target population of students are chosen to participate in the aforementioned nonacademic programs. Sixty-two percent of our student body participates in these nonacademic programs. Our programs are accessible to students with disabilities through special accommodations.

We continuously strive to reach our goals of making our students the focus of everything we do. Our programs assist us in promoting academic, social, and personal growth in our youngsters, ensuring that they continue to be successful responsible citizens in a global, technological society.

A3. How does the school determine and address the developmental needs of students as they move from grade to grade?

We address the developmental needs of our students as they move from grade to grade by observing, assessing, and evaluating each student. Through observing and collecting assessment data, we use the information about the child to determine if they are developmentally ready to move toward increased academic challenges.

As a popular school of choice in our district, we experience new student enrollment each year. In our efforts to ease the transition for new students, we have established a buddy program. We pair the new students with a grade level "buddy" to show them around the school and help them find classes.

Upon the completion of fifth grade, many of our students remain at Brace-Lederle for their middle school years. The familiarity of the teachers and the venue, eases the transition from elementary to middle school. Our monthly town meetings and other school-wide activities are often divided into two groups: Kindergarten through fourth grade and fifth through eighth grade. This allows the children of the fifth grade to see what they can expect in the future. The students see the progression of responsibilities and liberties. As a result they eagerly look forward to moving to the next grade. Our eighth grade teaching team, along with our counselor, provides our students an opportunity to visit the high school prior to the completion of their eighth grade year. This allows them to have a sense of comfort as they prepare to make the transition from middle school to high school. Throughout the school year, our local high school bands are often invited to perform at our school. This not only serves as an incentive to participate in band, it also serves as an icebreaker for our students, as they move to a new school environment.

A4. What cocurricular activities are available for students and how do those activities extend the academic curriculum?

Our school provides a host of cocurricular activities for students to experience. We offer a diverse athletic program, which includes basketball, baseball, football, volleyball, track and field, and swimming. With the exception of football, all athletic activities are available for boys and girls. We also have a program called the Spirit Club. This is a group of students who may not be athletically inclined but wish to be involved in athletics in a supportive capacity. They bolster the athletic programs in a variety of ways, from cheering at games to organizing pep rallies. As a result of the wide array of sports offered, we find that a large percentage of our student body participates in the athletic programs in some manner.

Some other cocurricular activities we offer are the Newspaper Club, Technology Club, Band and Orchestra Club, Michigan-First Credit Union, Spanish Club, After School Learning Center, Young Astronauts, Vocal Music, Art, Oratorical and Debate Team, Step Dancers, and Service Learning.

Through ongoing dialogue and requests from our students, we are constantly re-evaluating and implementing programs to meet the needs of our youngsters. Many of the cocurricular programs that have been established serve as extensions of our academic programs. They offer our students an opportunity to use higher-level thinking skills as they apply concepts they have learned in class to real life situations. This is demonstrated in the Michigan First Credit Union. In this program we partner with a local credit union. The credit union is operated by students as well as providing services to the students. This allows our students to practice math and social skills, as well as learning the value of maintaining employment. Within the school district, we currently have the largest number of active credit union members, as well as the most funds in active accounts.

A5. How does the school address the accessibility of its facilities and campus to students and others with disabilities?

Our single level facility easily allows for the use of wheelchairs and other motorized vehicles. We currently have a teacher on staff that utilizes a motorized wheelchair. Our school has demonstrated a commitment to addressing the accessibility of school facilities and programs to students with disabilities by making all entrances wheelchair accessible. Our school busses are equipped with lifts to accommodate wheelchair students. New "state of the art" handicapped accessible playground equipment has been installed at our school. We provide proper storage of snacks and monitor intake for students who have diabetes.

All special education classrooms are equipped with the same computers and video technologies as regular education classrooms. Computer tables, keyboards, and mice have been adapted where necessary, to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Para-professionals are placed in classrooms to assist in meeting disabled students' special educational needs. All handicapped students participate in single subject enrichment classes, as well as musical programs, field trips, and cocurricular activities.

B. School Organization and Culture

B1. How does the culture of the school support the learning of all its members and foster a caring community?

The Brace-Lederle School Culture is defined by our shared beliefs and values:

- We believe that all children can and will learn.
- Family support and involvement are critical to successful student achievement.
- All students have equal access to a quality and challenging curriculum.
- People learn in a variety of ways.
- High expectations yield high achievement.
- Collaboration and communication are vital to our success.
- Learning is a lifelong process.

These core beliefs and values are the foundation of the Brace-Lederle learning community. Care and commitment are an intrinsic part of the Brace-Lederle culture. There is a genuine sense of family and pride infused into our culture. As seeds are planted in kindergarten and begin to sprout in elementary, the full bloom is demonstrated in the eighth grade year, as the students leave our K-8 program fully prepared for the high school experience.

Collaborative partnerships among students, staff, and parents are strengthened by the K-8 population and the looping experience. Administration is able to effectively empower teachers and staff as everyone takes ownership of student behavior.

Students respond positively, for they know their teachers truly care and are invested in their success. According to one eighth grader, "The feeling of seeing my old teachers is like seeing my mom

in school." Another Brace-Lederle eighth grade veteran stated, "I feel that the K-8 school is like a family. The older kids look out for the younger children. Also the older children give the younger children someone to look up to like a role model. In the family, the teachers and other staff act like our parents. They guide us in the right direction." According to one fifth grader who has been at Brace-Lederle since kindergarten, "It feels like a good place. My second/third grade teacher still helps me understand things I don't know."

This sense of family permeates the Brace-Lederle culture as looping further increases the level of connectedness. Brace-Lederle has 3 looping cycles, in grades 2 and 3, grades 4 and 5, and grades 7 and 8. Supported by administrative leadership, Brace-Lederle is organized to empower teachers to cultivate relationships with students (i.e. room locations, common planning, weekly team meetings). The practice of looping provides a stable foundation for caring teachers to develop extended relationships with students and their families. Teachers are more effective as looping allows them to focus more on the big picture of overall student learning. They gain more time to grow the whole child. Teachers in looping grades also report fewer disciplinary problems, special education referrals, and retentions.

Parents have also embraced Brace-Lederle's K-8 learning environment and looping practices. Parents appreciate the K-8 format where they can send siblings to one building. The older sibling can look out for the younger sibling. All the while, the parents are increasingly familiar with the teacher expectations and school policies. As one parent shares, "I know my children are in a safe, loving environment. Our family has grown with Brace over the years. I am better able to support my children as I am already familiar with the school procedures. The looping experiences have been the most rewarding as my children's teachers really get a chance to know them." Another parent reports, "I love the loop! I am familiar with the teacher's classroom expectations. The teacher really gets to know the strengths and weaknesses of my child."

The Brace-Lederle family culture positively sets the stage for learning. Teachers are empowered and invested; parents are valued and informed; and most importantly students feel supported during through their entire learning process. There are a plethora of factors that contribute to the process of engaging all Brace-Lederle's partners – staff, parents, and students. Staff participates in this process daily. Inquiry, reflection, and empowered decision-making are exemplified in the everyday interactions of the Brace-Lederle staff. The master schedule provides time for peer collaboration and common planning. Teachers in the same grade level have a common planning prep time, allowing time for reflective discussion and a sounding board for best practices. In addition to common planning, each grade level team meets weekly with the building principal. The results of these collaborative meetings are then shared via email to the entire staff. Teachers also share and use a common language, which ultimately increases the students' overall understanding. All staff has been trained on Strategies That Work from the book by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis. Our common language for reading comprehension allows students to scaffold their prior knowledge as they progress through the program.

The Brace-Lederle staff continues the process of responsible decision making in monthly staff meetings and addresses larger building goals and professional development needs at the Annual Retreat. For example, one ongoing goal of Brace-Lederle was improving communication as the staff grew. As a result of collective brainstorming, the Brace-Lederle staff decided to use Email as the standard form of building communication. Teachers reflect upon and set goals during annual individual dialogues with our building principal.

Brace-Lederle parents are also key decision-makers in our community. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) supports monthly academic performances by attending in large numbers. Profits from the two annual PTA fund-raisers are used to support academic programs, such as Battle of the Books and extended learning field trips. In addition to the PTA, parents are invited to Brace-Lederle as 'students' on Parent Visitation Day. Many of Brace-Lederle's parents also volunteer to speak at our Annual Career Day.

The most important indicator that Brace-Lederle is a caring community of learners is the students' perspective of their academic and social experiences. Students reflect upon their academic growth and citizenship monthly at Town Meetings and each cardmarking at the Honors Program. Each

morning, children learn responsible citizenship as they gather together in the Town Morning Meetings. Service squad members assist in monitoring peer behavior. Students at Brace-Lederle are more accurately described as children growing up in the Brace-Lederle family.

B2. What opportunities do students have to build sustained and caring relationships with teachers and other adults? How does the school promote a healthy peer climate among the students?

The K-8 program coupled with Looping continuously fosters positive relationships among our staff and students. Team teaching and departmentalization also provide students with more exposure to Brace-Lederle's diverse teaching staff. Children enjoy the annual Bump-N-Grow Day when they experience the expertise of other teachers in the building. Staff has utilized the work of Chip Wood's *Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4 -14*. This book has been instrumental in the staff's understanding of the developmental needs of our K-8 student body. The after-school MEAP tutorial and after-school learning program further expose the children to the diverse Brace-Lederle staff.

These strong teacher/student relationships, combined with peer mediation, create a healthy peer climate for Brace-Lederle students. On the elementary level, students begin the process of conflict resolution as teachers conference with students to help them talk out and ultimately resolve their conflicts. This process continues more formally at the middle school level, when students are trained by in peer mediation. The peer mediation program trains an average of 60 students annually. Brace-Lederle also fosters healthy student relationships with adults through the male and female mentorship programs. Many community leaders and successful businessmen and women participate in the mentorship program. Students have been exposed to our city's chief of police, attorneys, principals, and a number of other professional community leaders. We are very fortunate to have our administrators, Mr. Horn, Mr. MacNeal, and our counselor, Mr. Tafelski serve as mentors for many of our youngsters. Both the peer mediation and mentorship programs not only resolve conflicts, but also promote the students' self-confidence and increase their overall sense of belonging.

Service Learning is yet another opportunity where caring is intertwined with curriculum. It also crosses the grade levels and allows students to work cooperatively for a worthy cause. Service Learning extends learning outside the classroom. It provides students who normally avoid leadership with opportunities to shine. For example, one eighth grade student was consistently tardy and not participating in her classes prior to the onset of the project. She was not invested in her schooling. This student immediately took a leadership role, as she became the service learning project leader for the penny drive. This young lady used her passing time to encourage her peers to donate change. She even made herself into a walking kiosk as she "wore" her penny drive poster daily. She began coming to school on time and had a more positive attitude about her classes, as she became increasingly eager to work on *her* penny drive. Her peers and teachers began to look at her as a leader, not a troublemaker. From the penny drive through the eighth grade promotion, this student never lost her shine! These rewarding student-led opportunities promote mutual respect among students and staff.

B3. How are teachers hired in the school? How are teacher assignments made?

The hiring pool consists of candidates identified at hiring fairs, via the Internet, etc. District central personnel create the slate of candidates. Potential teacher candidates are referred to the building administrator from the personnel office.

During the interview process, a team of teachers and the administrator interview the candidates. It is the philosophy of the administrator that this team selects the candidate who shares the pedagogical philosophy of educating the whole child. All candidates must meet district standards and be highly qualified in their major area of study. Brace-Lederle has a reputation for seeking and hiring teachers with dual certification.

It is also essential that the potential hire is willing and able to go beyond the description of the position for which he/she is applying. Teachers at Brace-Lederle involve themselves in mentorships, committee participation, research, and community involvement. Being a team player is paramount.

Teachers are assigned to their positions first and foremost according to certification in their major area of study. They must meet or exceed state criteria for highly qualified teachers.

At Brace-Lederle teachers' strengths are utilized to address student's needs. The administrator uses his right of assignment to create the strongest teams possible to accommodate the individual needs of each grade level. The administrator also provides teachers with the opportunity to investigate and explore other teaching possibilities within the building so that a more appropriate teaching "fit" might be made. An example of distribution of strengths is evident in our after-school MEAP tutorial program as classroom teachers are partnered with teachers who demonstrate complementary strengths. Students receive tutoring prior to MEAP testing by teachers that are highly qualified and teaching in that subject area.

B4. What is the school's plan for school safety, discipline, and drug prevention? What is the record for the past five years?

Brace-Lederle has a complete and comprehensive student handbook in which the student code of conduct is explained in detail for both students and parents outlining how students are held accountable for their behavior. The categories in which behavior is stringently addressed are Insubordination, Inappropriate and/or Unacceptable Behavior, Stealing or Vandalism, Fighting, Substance Abuse or Dangerous Weapons, and Bus Violations. These offenses are clearly presented in the handbook and rules are diligently enforced by administration. (See Appendix 1)

Brace-Lederle also adheres to a strict dress code for all students. This dress code puts all students on a level playing field in which no one is threatened or intimidated and promotes a sense of unity, respect, and order.

Brace-Lederle staff utilizes an array of strategies, techniques, and resources to ensure the safety of the members of its learning community while maintaining an orderly and drug-free environment. We assembled a team of our own to devise an in depth and comprehensive crisis prevention plan that addresses virtually all areas of crisis. The plan includes a color-coded crisis management schedule, which spells out the steps that need to be taken during an intrusive emergency. Further, our crisis management plan includes thirteen additional response plans that give specific directives as to how to respond to a particular situation. Those thirteen plans include:

- intruder
- death of a person during non-attendance hours
- death of a person on school grounds
- suicide off school grounds
- suicide on school grounds
- bus accident
- bomb threat
- tornado
- fire
- anonymous threat to bring guns or weaponry
- national crisis
- biochemical situation

Brace-Lederle administrators are serious about the issue of security. This is demonstrated by employing a full-time security guard. His charge is to ensure the safety of all students upon arrival at school. He maintains order at dismissal. He patrols the halls during the school day and is assigned to

ensure that the cafeterias are free from incidents. The staff, student body, and community are appreciative and respectful of his position.

The students at Brace-Lederle are instructed at all grade levels as to the protocol and rules of our school. The rules are clearly posted throughout the building. Rules are posted in each classroom as well. The teachers share a common language and procedure for travel in the hallways.

Brace-Lederle institutes the Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) program yearly with the fifth-grade students. The students go through the entire drug awareness program, which culminates with a graduation ceremony. The students take great pride in this endeavor and enjoy the ongoing relationship they maintain with the police liaisons year after year. DARE graduates make a pledge to be free of drugs. This pledge combined with our code of conduct serves as a deterrent as they become aware of the ramifications of illegal behavior.

C. Challenging Standards and Curriculum

C1. How does the curriculum serve the broad goals for student learning and development that the general public expects education to achieve: personal and intellectual growth, citizenship, and preparation for work and higher education? What relative emphasis does the school place on these goals in the curriculum?

Our developmentally appropriate curriculum addresses all core domains on a daily basis. Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Sciences are naturally integrated in everyday school life. Along with these core areas, our students receive instruction and guidance in character development. This academic and character curriculum is addressed in multifaceted ways and on an ongoing basis as learning in one grade level is spiraled and reinforced as the student moves through the grades.

Through collective professional knowledge and experience, teachers address the complex learning process from many different perspectives and with an adaptable set of instructional strategies using an interdisciplinary approach. Within each discipline we approach every child with the intent that they take discreet skills and learn to apply them in ways that will prepare them to navigate within a complex and global society. We focus on our students' achievement of conceptual understandings that can be applied to discerning patterns among ideas, establishing unifying principles, and discriminating similarities and differences among events. Our focus is embedding our curriculum with complex topics requiring problem solving and developing those skills within the realm of everyday learning so that our students will become life-long learners.

Brace-Lederle's English/Language Arts curriculum is aligned with the state of Michigan's standards and benchmarks. Each content area has a strong emphasis on reading and writing as literacy skills are considered to be the foundation upon which children are prepared for full participation in today's society, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, or socioeconomic status. At Brace-Lederle all teachers and parents are considered to be teachers of literacy, and our English /Language Arts integrates reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. We incorporate a balanced literacy program that includes skill and strategy instruction in the context of our students' reading and writing. (A1 C5) Sophisticated levels of literacy are achieved as literacy programs from classroom to classroom throughout K-8 demonstrate clear and consistent connections. Within these classrooms, our teachers implement reading/writing workshops and use a wide range of reading materials to meet the needs of many reading levels in the same class. Our teachers also incorporate collaborative reading formats which facilitate literacy growth including buddy reading, reading conferences, reader's theater, choral reading, and book clubs. (A2) Not only does our literacy instruction incorporate the current brain research of Eric Jensen and others, but also our teachers integrate technologies to support literacy including word processing software, CD-ROM's, Internet, multi-media, and graphic software. We provide ongoing assessment of our students that is formative, reflective, and part of the teaching and learning process. Instructional programs for literacy acquisition, particularly in the early grades, include interventions established by the Reading Clinician and classroom teachers, in order to meet the needs of all learners. There is an effort to

build bridges between school and home to enhance the literacy learning of all of our students. This effort is scaffolded through teacher-led parent workshops and through the district Parenting University program.

Our math instruction embodies the notion that mathematical power is the ability to explore, conjecture, read logically, and apply a variety of mathematical methods to solve problems. Effective math instruction will yield a student who is able to reason and communicate using math vocabulary, as they apply these skills in the world around them. Beginning in kindergarten, our math program emphasizes questioning and reasoning as students grow into eighth-grade problem solvers. Concrete experiences, through the use of manipulatives, provide a deeper understanding of concepts. A richer knowledge base is developed as students express mathematical thinking in writing. For instance, a student may explain how they solved a problem in their writing journal. Relevant literature is another aspect that is added to the math curriculum as a strategy to develop meaning of concepts.

Brace-Lederle's mathematical curriculum is in alignment with the state's benchmarks. We focus on the following six strands:

- I. Patterns, Relationships, and Functions
- II. Geometry and Measurement
- III. Data Analysis and Statistics
- IV. Number Sense and Numeration
- V. Numerical and Algebraic Operations and Analytical Thinking
- VI. Probability and Discrete Mathematics

All these standards are pursued at every grade level. This is evident in our Math MEAP scores.

Science is addressed with a hands-on approach as students are guided through the scientific method. Inquiry-based teaching is utilized as students collaborate and engage in experiments. An example of this is of the second grade classroom of Mrs. Lewis. Children develop deeper questions that go beyond information in the text as they formulate understandings. Mrs. Lewis provides opportunities for her children to investigate and discover answers to the questions that evolve. This sets the stage for further investigations that are of high interest to the children. Addressing the curiosity of children within this paradigm offers unlimited motivational components to the learning process as students construct their knowledge.

Again, engaging children in relevant literature is an important part of our science curriculum. Through interaction with text, our students are able to gain understandings that go beyond facts. In this way they learn about the human elements of scientific discovery.

The Social Science curriculum addresses the core democratic values inherent in our society. We use a developmental approach as we recognize that children must have a keen understanding of certain facts so that they can move on to a paradigm that involves a hands-on approach to civic practice. We help our students connect learning to their roles as active citizens. We help our students learn the elements of our democracy and gain an understanding and awareness of the rich multicultural elements of our global society. This is further reinforced by the diversity program, which is held annually under the direction of Mrs. Lewis. An incorporation of rich literature is a key component of delivering the most meaningful instruction in this discipline as well. This brings to life the human elements involved in our history and presents a more comprehensive and significant learning experience.

Multiculturalism and Diversity - As we prepare our students to act and interact in a global society, we are mindful to address the concept and value of diversity and multicultural education. In our annual diversity program students, teachers, and parents participate. Beyond that we incorporate three levels of content integration. These include contributions from various racial and ethnic groups, the addition of a transformative approach as we work to present our students with views of subject matter from different racial and cultural perspectives, and social action as we guide our students toward decision making in their world based upon what they have learned. This learning is further enhanced by the incorporation of Spanish as a foreign language in grades K-8.

Character Development - Our students and parents are introduced to our Student Code of Conduct at the beginning of each school year. Through this vehicle the expectations of our students are clearly addressed and presented in a meeting by our principal, assistant principal, and support staff.

Brace-Lederle students take part in several programs that enhance their character development. These include peer mediation, the D.A.R.E. program, service learning, and male/female mentorship programs. The program, *Mindful Manners: a step-by-step guide for bringing manners back into the classroom*, has been used since 2002 for encouraging mutual respect between students and staff. This program brings accountability to the students by using strategies of cooperation, positive role modeling, and responsible peer pressure.

Developing an Appreciation for Democratic Values - We strive to teach skills and the virtues of democratic deliberation within a social context where educational authority is shared among parents and educators in order to scaffold the development and value of citizenship. We educate our children to exercise their rights and to fulfill their responsibilities of democratic citizenship so that as future adult citizens they will have the ability to make good decision, not only for themselves, but for the common good as well. An example of this was demonstrated when Mrs. Deane's third grade students agreed to donate their game space to be used as a science storage area that would serve the common good of the building. This awareness of democratic values begins in kindergarten and is extended throughout the grades. Our literacy strategies, such as Narrative and Expository Profundity and Frayer's Model lend themselves to the development and understanding of our core democratic values. This demonstrates another avenue in which we integrate our disciplines.

Technological and interpersonal skills - Our students are afforded the opportunity to: work in collaborative environments, understand and implement efforts within collaborative structures and develop their technical skills to compete in a global marketplace. We understand the need to assist students in the development of such skills so that they will be empowered as they enter the world of work. Therefore, all students have the opportunity to interact with computers, digital cameras, video equipment, and audio/visual equipment as well. Through character education, we promote an ethos that embraces integrity, honor, high moral ethics, diligence, and tenacity.

C2. How is the school organized to provide for differing student academic needs within the school's goals, priorities, and curriculum?

A primary goal at Brace-Lederle is to provide opportunities for students at every level of learning and to address a multitude of needs in our students. With respect to literacy development, decisions about student grouping are ongoing and dynamic. We recognize that our children possess fundamental attributes needed to become literate. Our charge is to assess those abilities, teach the child from where they are developmentally, and continually move them forward in their learning. This is done with ongoing assessments from which data is analyzed and a teaching plan is established that will move the child along the continuum of academic growth. We provide children with the opportunity to participate in socially supported activities, as we move them toward independence by teaching in a context that supports their development. 100% of our K-3 students are evaluated using assessments such as Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) K-3 and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Literacy/reading levels are determined and children are placed in appropriate literacy/reading groups, where skill development in all related areas is addressed. Students are continually re-evaluated and regrouped as necessary. Guided reading groups and literature circles accommodate our diverse learners as does engaging students in readers/writers workshops. Book Buddies and other cross-grade level associations scaffold learning at different levels.

Our teachers team-teach so that the students can benefit from the strengths of many teachers. Our teachers also loop which provides a teacher with the opportunity to deeply know and understand her/his students and develop those understandings and personal relationships to better serve each student. The Reading Clinician works with small groups of students who have been designated through assessment and observation as at risk. Our teachers also use a differentiated instructional approach to teaching and learning.

This approach is carried over into all of our other curricular areas. For example, in math, small group instruction on the same objective addresses the needs of diverse learners as they progress from concrete to abstract applications.

C3. How does the school ensure that diverse learners (for example, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, and students placed at risk) have the opportunity to learn challenging content and achieve at high levels?

Our school accommodates all learners. For those students who have met or exceeded grade level benchmarks, we have established Intensive Studies (IS) classrooms, where they are presented with a more challenging curriculum in all areas. These students serve as academic leaders who bridge their accelerated learning with the rest of the Brace-Lederle student body as they attend electives and special classes.

The general student body is offered the opportunity to take part in activities such as Battle of the Books, the Brace-Lederle Newsletter, and the Brace-Lederle Video Club. Parallel to those environments are classrooms that differentiate instruction so that the needs of our students working at an average or lower level of achievement can be accommodated. Teachers in these classrooms develop and facilitate robust plans of instruction in response to students' learning differences. Although we have no students with limited English proficiency, this is also the case for students with disabilities. These curricular offerings focus on the *essential* components within a domain. In these classrooms, teachers unconditionally accept students where they are and hold high expectations for them as well. These teachers plan carefully and use ongoing reflection to guide students at a comfortable pace, with appropriately challenging lessons, while addressing their specific learning styles. Varied forms of assessments are offered in order to ensure students every opportunity to demonstrate their skills and understandings.

Our students with special needs are addressed in a variety of instructional settings. Many of our special needs students are mainstreamed into regular education classrooms, while others benefit from the Trainable Mentally Impaired (TMI) classroom setting. We have a learning disabilities special education teacher who utilizes the Language! Program, which is a research-based program focusing on the rules and phonetics of our English language.

Our disabled students receive services from our speech pathologist, occupational and physical therapists. Physically or Otherwise Handicapped Instruction (POHI) consultants offer services to our students with health or physical impairments. Teacher consultants from our intermediate school district, service autistic, visually impaired, hearing impaired and other special needs students. All support staff consult with regular education teachers regarding educational programs for special needs students.

The Reading Clinician is the general education liaison to the Oakland County Collaborative Advisory Council for Student Success. The intent of this initiative is to increase and facilitate general education and special education collaboration in a unified delivery system for all students. In this regard, she shares findings as they relate to establishing a new model for the identification of learning disabilities, facilitating instructional support models focused on prevention and response to instruction and providing comprehensive, ongoing professional development focused on improved outcomes in teaching and learning.

C4. What is the process for continuous curriculum renewal at the school? What questions about curriculum is the school currently addressing?

Curriculum is generated at the district level and is grounded in the Michigan Curriculum Framework and the Michigan content standards and benchmarks. At the school level, our staff examines the key components of the curriculum and works collaboratively between and among grade levels in an effort to make good decisions about the most effective teaching strategies. The Reading Clinician offers professional development to enhance areas that are determined to be essential. Additionally, our

curriculum coordinators are a critical component as they address specific needs of the teachers. We continually question how to meld knowledge bases across content areas as we strive to engage students in the skills of inquiry, communication, methods of organization, and application. Concurrently we work towards motivating students and providing guidance. To achieve these goals, grade level teachers meet to create assessments used to evaluate progress, determine areas of weakness, and collaboratively decide on strategies that enhance the teaching and learning process. They meet with the principal to generate thinking that lead to appropriate modifications.

Teachers also take part in action research in order to determine the effectiveness of programs and practices for all students. Action research was carried out to determine the effectiveness of using the Narrative Profundity Scale to scaffold comprehension skills in our students K-8. Another action research project was carried out to begin to establish writing benchmarks that would be appropriate to our school district in particular, rather than using rubrics established by the state or other educational agencies. In addition, The Kindergarten Literature Program (KLP) was the center of yet another action research project. This was a program developed by Dr. Elizabeth Sulzby of University of Michigan. A group of teachers collaborated with Dr. Sulzby and instituted her program in our kindergarten classes. This was done to determine the effects of introducing books to students at the kindergarten level and allowing them specific times to reread these specific books in order to enhance student pleasure, familiarity, and deep comprehension. Teachers invited emergent reading of the books and emergent writing in response to the books. Children were assessed using the Sulzby Classification Scheme.

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our instruction. Our expert staff is often recruited by the district to modify and update curriculum. Recognizing that no system is perfect, we therefore make adjustments where needed and rely on our own expertise and sound pedagogy, not solely on textbooks. The high level of expertise of the staff is apparent as they continue to scaffold the learning process and take the initiative to fulfill academic responsibilities to our students.

C5. Successful schools offer all students opportunities to be engaged with significant content. How does the school ensure that students achieve at high levels in the core subjects?

Curriculum has as its starting point a set of universal concepts, principles, skills and understandings with which our educational community would agree are important for students to learn. Within each discipline, these goals are met using the foundational principles of constructivism. It is our belief that knowledge acquisition in this manner affords all students with the opportunities to be engaged with significant content. The benefits are numerous as children are actively engaged: they learn to think and understand, they can take specific thinking into other learning settings, they have ownership of their learning, and because their learning is grounded in an authentic real-world context. Constructivism stimulates and engages students, while promoting social and communication skills in a classroom atmosphere of collaboration. Within this context our content areas are addressed

a. English (Language Arts) – The Language Arts are comprised of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing. There are twelve content standards upon which this curriculum was based and the benchmark skills students are expected to master as expressed in the grade level content expectations. These expectations represent discreet layers of learning at each grade level. A foundational piece of literacy is oral language. Oral language serves to deepen the thought processes that are instrumental in developing the prerequisite skills of reading and writing competence. Embedded in that process is sensory value gained from speaking, listening, and viewing. We encourage a proliferation of connections that fuse literacy learning in all content areas, including music, art, drama, oral recitation and nature experiences. Within a balanced approach, we incorporate guided, shared, and independent reading and writing, word study, fluency, vocabulary development, spelling, comprehension, and oral language development. Curriculum is articulated in a spiraling fashion whereby learning in one grade level supports and reinforces the next level of competence. Inherent is a cyclical plan to observe, assess, plan, teach, and reflect on an ongoing basis.

To scaffold reading and writing the entire student population takes part in March is Reading Month activities. Guest readers visit our schools, including Judge Cooper and the assistant to the Mayor of Southfield. The culmination is celebrated as all teachers in the building dress up as their favorite storybook characters. All K-6 classes take part in the Book-It program. Throughout the school year we invite storytellers to perform for our lower elementary children. We also share *Family Fundamentals*, a parent activity and guidebook with our parents, in order to assist and encourage them so they can participate in literacy activities with their children.

Writing is encouraged and honored in our school and time for writing is non-negotiable. We have a rigorous writing curriculum, as we believe that writing is a tool that will empower our children as readers, thinkers, and composers of meaning across the content areas. Through careful research, a writing program was implemented to secure a common language and bridge between grade levels. We have a *Writing Wall* that has a place of distinction in our building. Each month teachers from all grade levels select pieces of student generated writing to be displayed for all students, teachers, and visitors to our school to enjoy. Pieces of writing come from all content areas including art as we encourage an interdisciplinary development of writing. It is our goal to provide our students with support and rich language opportunities.

b. Mathematics is addressed in a multifaceted way. Hands-on activities provide opportunities for children to operationalize concepts. Literature is embedded in the math curriculum as a vehicle addressing alternative learning styles. As a member of the State of Michigan's Elementary Mathematics Content Advisory Committee and as a member of the AIMS National Leadership Network, Mr. Noyes, one of our Spanish teachers, offers current information to our staff in an effort to keep them in tune with current thinking and pedagogy. He also participated in a review of the 4th grade Math MEAP for this year and also of the items for the 2005-2006 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade math MEAP test. This type of insight lends helps us make appropriate curricular decisions.

c. Science - Our students enjoy multiple opportunities to delve deeply into their understandings of scientific concepts. The Michigan content benchmarks and standards describe three broad categories of activities that are common in scientifically literate individuals: using scientific knowledge, constructing new scientific knowledge, reflecting on scientific knowledge. It is our expectation that our students meet the standards at each level of schooling, as all the standards are pursued at every grade level of the curriculum from K-8. This depth of learning is supported by the science curriculum coordinator, Mrs. Hardy, who ensures that our student body has the opportunity to go beyond the textbook and interact with science materials, gaining a concrete, hands-on experience. Our students work with Foss Science Kits, and have access to our science lab and resource room. Students are also provided with consumable materials to enhance their understandings. Some of these include plants and mealworms. As in all of our content areas, literature is used to scaffold learning and understandings. Oftentimes, biographies of great scientists are incorporated into the lessons. Writing is a key component in ensuring understanding of content and teachers provide many opportunities for students to write as a way of synthesizing information as they explain their process of discovery. In addition, Brace-Lederle students all take part in our annual science fair when they each have the opportunity to create and engage in an inquiry based project using the scientific method. This type of approach to science promotes scientific reasoning and critical thinking in addition to acquisition of content knowledge. This enhances the development of citizens who have the abilities necessary for independent thinking and success in their lives beyond school.

d. Social Science - Our social sciences curriculum prepares our students to become responsible citizens displaying social understanding of civic efficacy. Our curriculum integrates and connects powerful learning as they are aided by technology to gather, interpret, and analyze information. Their ability to engage in civic discourse is manifested by the use of oral and written expression. These skills are demonstrated as they interact with the strands of historical, geographic, civic and economic perspective.

The use of inquiry decision making is inherent in all of our approaches to content. Our coordinator, Mr. Larsen provides many concrete materials so that students enjoy a multifaceted approach to social studies. Maps, globes, appropriate charts, and videos are available in all classrooms and serve to enhance the core curriculum. Children begin to learn the core democratic values in kindergarten and the lessons are spiraled throughout the grade levels, as writing becomes an integral part of the learning process. Dramatic play provides students with opportunities to delve into the lives of our ancestors and develop an understanding of the human element of history. This is further scaffolded as children read historical accounts of literature. The media specialist works with each teacher to provide appropriate materials as well as presenting lessons that complement the thematic units.

e. The Arts

Art – Our art teacher, Mrs. Crimmins, incorporates art projects that correspond to classroom themes as we strive to maintain an interdisciplinary approach to educating our children. She worked with the kindergarten class on a self-esteem unit and integrated a project based on the book Follow the Drinking Gourd with the third grade during African-American History month. She incorporates readings of children's literature as she points out illustrations that speak to artistic styles she is sharing with the class. Whenever we have storytellers visit our school, Mrs. Crimmins makes a point of extending the storytelling experience with an art project.

Vocal Music – Our vocal music department is designed with the belief that music is essential in developing skills needed for lifelong learning in a changing and culturally diverse world. Students are taught the importance and appropriate use of breathing, intonation, and posture. They perform using voice, instruments, and movement that coincide with the developmental approach of our physical education department. They access comprehension skills as they analyze, evaluate, and describe music. This program also integrates the historical and multicultural aspects of music with our social science content.

f. World Languages – Spanish is taught from kindergarten through the eighth grade. At the K-3 grade level, the Spanish program is primarily oral. The focus is on the students learning to use the Spanish language in natural situations. The natural approach is used to teach greetings, introductions, and directions. Students learn Spanish vocabulary that parallels the vocabulary in their regular classroom. The classroom teacher and the Spanish teacher work together so the students enjoy this integration in both settings, leading to deeper understandings. At this level, a unit comparing our local culture and a Spanish community is presented. The students are then invited to share the connections that they discover. There is a strong emphasis on integrating the Spanish language in the reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing aspects of our English curriculum. In addition the K-3 teacher uses The Total Physical Response Method to teach songs, stories, games, and Readers Theater.

In grades 4-5 Spanish language development is continued with an emphasis on reading comprehension, writing, grammar, and an extension of vocabulary development. Multi-media materials, such as videos and CD's, are used in addition to textbooks and workbooks.

In the middle school, students begin a more structured approach to language learning. They learn to speak, read, and write with an emphasis on application. Two textbooks are used to introduce students to concepts such as verb conjugation and to provide practice in grammar skills until they are mastered. Students access technology as they work on-line at a site provided by the textbook publishing company allowing for drill and practice that correlates exactly to the content of their textbooks. Students at all levels are exposed to the Spanish culture from around the world through field trips to sites in Mexican Town and throughout Metropolitan Detroit.

C6. What other content areas or programs play essential roles in the school-wide curriculum goals?

Comprehension Strategy Instruction – There is a strong focus on comprehension strategy instruction across the grade levels and within content areas. This has been an on-going goal at Brace-Lederle. Three of our teachers studied in Denver, Colorado with the authors of Mosaic of Thought and Strategies That Work. The whole staff was then in-serviced and comprehension strategy instruction was embedded in our classroom instruction. We know that reading is a meaning-making process and implies thinking and understanding and that it is our charge to move children beyond decoding as that is only one step to becoming a fluent reader. Teachers incorporate these strategies in all content areas through modeling, engaging children in authentic response choices that encourage engagement and enable students to monitor their own comprehension. We believe that when children are engaged in reading their understanding will be enhanced, they will acquire more information and they will remember what they have read. As a result of these practices, we have seen an increase in meaningful conversation and increased learning, as noted in our MEAP scores. This substantiates our belief that oral language is the foundational piece of literacy development.

World Language – It has been our goal to integrate French and Spanish into the general education classrooms and throughout the building. As you walk our halls children get a sense of visiting a cultural island. Our walls are filled with artwork representative of the Spanish and French cultures. “Papel picado” cut paper, traditional folk-art hang, from the ceilings of our central corridor and flags from various countries are draped at our main entrance. As students enter and walk through the building they are surrounded with common vocabulary words that are an integral part of the decorations on walls, windows and doorways. Our library is adorned with banners in French and Spanish and English with motivational messages such as “Everyone smiles in the same language” and “Reading opens the door to Learning.” The general education teachers in grades K-5 attend Spanish classes with the students and works collaboratively with the Spanish teacher infusing Spanish with their daily lessons. On a typical day one will here Spanish greetings as children pass through the halls. As children depart they are saluted with adios and au revoir. (C. 5f)

C7. What requirements must be satisfied before a student is promoted to the next grade or level of schooling?

The students at Brace-Lederle are expected to meet high expectations throughout their educational journey. These expectations are clearly stated in our grade level expectations and outcomes that are shared with the parents and students at the beginning of every school year. Because we have many steps in place to measure and observe a child’s growth over time, we are able to proactively address problems as they occur. Teachers, support staff, parents, students, and principal, work together as a team to offer the most effective, comprehensive and proactive approach to addressing the needs of our students. Our goal is to teach the whole child and we therefore look in many directions to provide interventions so as to prevent the need for remediation.

Through a process called “Staffing” we discuss areas of need and develop a plan to evaluate many different aspects of the child. If the common assessments do not provide answers we look beyond those assessments in an attempt to find a working solution. Through our “Schools Attuned” training we will address the areas of attention (mental energy, processing and production controls), temporal/sequential ordering, spatial ordering, memory (long term, short term and active), language (receptive and expressive), neuromotor functions (gross, fine, and graphomotor), social cognition (verbal pragmatics, social behavior, political acumen), and higher order cognition (concept formation, critical thinking, problem solving, rule use and reasoning). As we look at these different components and arrive at our findings, we then move forward with a plan that will accommodate the child’s interests and abilities while we incorporate a flexible instructional plan. We offer students assistance on a social, academic, and emotional level. If a student is not able to fulfill the requirements set forth in our school and district policy, the parents are notified in a timely manner and a decision is made based on the best professional judgment and the input of the parents.

D. Active Teaching and Learning

D1. How are teaching practices and learning experiences in the school consistent with current knowledge about successful teaching and learning?

Successful learning is demonstrated as a result of best practice teaching strategies. Some common examples of our best practice methods are team teaching, looping, and utilizing the constructivist model. We have found that these practices increase student growth and create motivated and self-sufficient students.

It has been our experience that team teaching strengthens student learning and enhances professional interaction. This gives our teachers the ability to capitalize on their strengths and teach in their subject area. Currently, we are fully staffed with highly qualified educators. Looping, a practice which allows single-grade teachers to remain with the same class for a period of two or more years, is another unique strategy our school employs. It generally requires a partnership of two teachers in successive grades. This strategy of teaching encourages stronger teacher/student/family relationships. It allows teachers and students to get to know one another on a deeper level. Children learn the expectations of their teacher, while the teacher gets to know the needs and strengths of individual students. Other benefits of looping include a reduction in special education referrals, improved attendance, reduced discipline problems and a reduction in grade level retentions. Looping empowers us with the ability to promote successful, responsible citizens in a global, technological society.

For effective learning to occur, students must construct their own knowledge. As a staff, we acknowledge and honor this and we have shifted toward a constructivist model of teaching. We are not just providing information for students, but allowing them to do their own thinking. We have developed classroom environments based upon this constructivist theory, so that students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts freely and making connections to the world around them. As their knowledge and self-confidence grow, they are not only able to make immediate connections to their personal environment, but the world at large. We demonstrate this skill by modeling our own thinking process. Our ultimate goal is to provide students the opportunity to become active learners. This teaching practice can be extremely helpful when conducting a Language Arts lesson. For example, we use an approach called "Questioning the Author." This approach encourages students to think about the author's point of view.

D2. In what ways do teaching practices support student-initiated learning?

Teaching practices that we demonstrate at our school, have a significant impact on student-initiated learning. One such practice involves giving children the freedom to make choices within the classroom. Our children learn very early that with freedom comes responsibility. Therefore with every choice our students make, there is an equal measure of responsibility involved. We realize that if we want students to learn to be responsible decision-makers when they leave school, we must begin to create opportunities for them to make important decisions in school. This practice is demonstrated as we give them the power to make decisions regarding certain aspects of their education. An example would be choosing between two or three essay topics that all demonstrate the learning objective. Another example would be allowing them to choose between answering all the odd or even number problems in a textbook. It could even be something as simple as choosing their own books or giving them free writing time in their journals. By allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, we are creating the conditions for high quality learning, better student achievement, and greater success for all of our students.

The classroom environments in our school support student-initiated learning as well. Many classrooms have replaced rows of desks, with tables or they position chairs in groups to promote interaction. This type of classroom setting initiates group work, rich discussions, and opportunities for children to learn from each other. In our classrooms walls are covered with student-generated work and student-authored behavioral expectations. Most of our classrooms have "cozy" areas. Our "cozy" areas

will often have comfortable chairs or sofas, lamps, pillows, rugs, and a wide variety of reading materials. Students find these areas warm and inviting. It would not be unusual to find children sitting in the classroom "cozy," engaged in task-oriented discussions.

In any organization, whenever someone gains knowledge or skills and is given opportunities to maximize their potential, the entire organization gains. Similarly, in a classroom, as each student gains power in responsible ways, the whole class is empowered.

D3. How are resources made available to teachers and students for gathering information and sharing the results of their efforts?

Resources are made available to teachers and students through our library/media center. Our school library/media center is an integral component of the school's overall instructional program. The library/media provides multiple services. The mission of the library/media center is to ensure that the students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. Our school has one full-time certified media specialist. She provides intellectual and physical access to materials in a variety of formats. Her guidance and instruction fosters competence and stimulates interest in reading, viewing, and using information. She also works with staff to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students.

Our library/media center is readily available and user friendly. Resources are continuously re-evaluated and kept current. Our staff takes advantage of opportunities to collaborate with our media specialist, because she is an essential tool in locating many resources in the library as well as online. She supports all aspects of the school curriculum and provides many resources that relate to the curriculum. Some of the services she provides include assistance with book selection, media support, technological support, and integration into curriculum, Internet services, and Microsoft workshops. She is responsible for meeting the diverse needs and backgrounds of our student population. She assembles and organizes a wide range of informational resources that satisfy the educational needs and interests of our students. She provides a mechanism for exploration beyond the prescribed course of study. Our library/media center is a place where our students may research classroom subjects that interest them, expand their imagination, delve into areas of personal interest, develop the ability to think clearly, critically, and creatively about resources they have chosen to read, hear, or view. Our students develop skills they will need as adults to locate, analyze, evaluate, interpret, and communicate information and ideas in an information-rich world. Our K-5 grades attend library on a regularly scheduled basis, and grades 6-8 have open circulation daily, ensuring 100% of our students have access to the media services.

D4. What technology applications is the school using to enhance learning? How do they relate to the curricular goals and how do they support teaching and learning?

We are very fortunate to have an administration and teachers who support the use of technology in the classroom. Every classroom in our building has at least two student computers and a teacher station. We also have two fully equipped computer labs with Internet access, and a full time technology teacher. Every student has access to the computer lab. Teachers often bring their classes to the lab to work on projects. Instruction in the use of technology is offered to all students in our school, and as an elective class for students in grades sixth, seventh, and eighth.

The middle school technology class has a specifically designed program that is outlined in a detailed syllabus. By the end of the eighth grade year, our students are proficient in keyboarding techniques and Microsoft Word. They will be able to create fliers, invitations, and banners using Microsoft Publisher, design presentations using Microsoft Power Point, and use the Internet to enhance learning in the content areas.

Ms. Thrash, our technology teacher, serves as a resource to our K-8 building. Not only does she teach technology to our middle school students; she is our resident technology specialist. Her classroom is fully stocked with the latest tools of instructional technology.

Technology serves as a vehicle to support our curricular goals and offers another form of learning. Our teachers use technology in their classrooms to support the curriculum. Examples include using the Internet link provided by the textbook publishers, classroom websites that may include grades and assignments, parent communication, and specially designed tests quizzes, and assignments. Another popular item utilized by our teachers are TV-ators. This is a device that allows information on a computer screen to be viewed on a television and shared with the entire class. The TV-ators are used in a variety of ways, which may include having the spelling words going across the screen, working with charts and graphs, solving complex math problems, and editing writing. Technology ultimately helps us to produce successful, responsible citizens in a global, technological society.

E. Professional Community

E1. What opportunities do teachers and other staff have to build professional community that enhances their collective capacity to work together to support student learning?

As we strive to enhance student achievement, the Brace-Lederle staff has worked diligently to develop a professional learning community. At the center of our professional community is our staff retreat. This annual event allows the entire staff, from noon aides to administrators, from paraprofessionals to teachers, to come together and collectively examine and plan our school goals. This time to collaborate is essential, as all members of the Brace-Lederle staff are able to share their perspectives. The result is a team of stakeholders who are truly invested in actively meeting the goals expressed in our mission statement (Part IV).

The collaborative time that is built into the master schedule, in the forms of weekly team meetings and common planning also allow teachers to dialogue. This provides time for teachers of the same grade level to reflect, brainstorm, and discuss best practices with peers. In weekly team meetings with the principal, teachers are also able to communicate their professional development needs as they arise.

The Southfield Public School district has also made professional development a top priority by allocating an hour after school one Monday each month to building-based mandatory professional development. For example, in past years the Brace-Lederle staff has been exposed to CPR training, teaching reading across the curriculum, and extensive workshops on building learning communities. The district also dedicates one day in the fall and one day in the spring to Professional Development.

In addition to these in-services, each teacher in the district is required to have 7.5 hours of staff development per year. In order to support this initiative, the district also provides a diversity of cross-curricular staff development opportunities. Individual teachers and staff, along with the building principal, determine which of these opportunities best fits the teaching needs of the staff. For example, Ms. White was interested in increasing the use of technology in her classroom and attended the Intel Teach to the Future Workshop. Other times, staff attends professional development workshops as a team. One such team, composed of a general education teacher, a special education teacher, the school psychologist, the school social worker, the reading clinician, and the speech pathologist were trained on how to "attune" a student at Dr. Mel Levine's Schools Attuned Training Workshop. These are just a sampling of the many professional development opportunities in which the Brace-Lederle staff participates. The information and strategies learned during these workshops are formally disseminated during common planning time, weekly team meetings, our annual staff retreat, and during the fall and spring professional development days. Our staff models the behavior we expect of our students; we are all truly lifelong learners. This is one of the reasons why the Brace-Lederle staff is composed of a well-rounded team of highly qualified teachers, who meet and/or exceed the state's standards.

The professional community of Brace-Lederle is also exemplified in our collective responsibility for student outcomes. Behavior management skills of classroom teachers is strengthened by looping and having the students from K-8 (V. B1. B2.). Grade level teams implement the same behavior management plans and intervention strategies. For example, at the elementary level, teachers utilize

incentive stores, tickets, and visual behavior charts to encourage positive behavior. At the middle school level, homeroom teachers share common expectations and utilize peer mediators to resolve student conflicts. (VB2.) Upper and middle school teachers also conduct grade level meetings to discuss appropriate expectations. It is our shared beliefs and values that yield high student expectations and ultimately result in student success.

Parents are also valued partners in our professional community. At all grade levels, staff continuously communicates with parents. Phone calls, voicemail, Email, classroom websites, letters, and newsletters keep parents informed and provide children with the necessary follow-up and consistency. Ideas from parents are welcomed monthly at the PTA meetings.

As our professional community grows together, we are constantly learning, teaching, and questioning. A walk through our building would reveal more "cozy" learning environments, the buzz of children sharing at tables, and teachers collaborating. Student learning is the fruit of professional community building. Although we are still working diligently at meeting our goals, it is evident that Brace-Lederle is a growing professional community.

E2. How does a coherent approach to professional development for teachers and other staff ensure their ability to implement effectively the school's curriculum, instructional strategies, and support system? How do organizational arrangements, such as time and teaching assignments, and school norms and culture, make professional development a priority?

The Brace-Lederle staff is composed of a diverse group of lifelong learners who are committed to the academic excellence of our students. It is through collective reflection, action research, and continuous professional development that our staff is able to effectively implement the district's curriculum. Brace-Lederle has also made a concerted effort to inservice its staff on sound instructional strategies. Reading teachers are fully equipped with training on the Profundity Scale, based on the work of Mortimer Adler and reconceived by Andreson, Huss, and Sargent. Profundity has visibly impacted our students' overall reading comprehension as demonstrated by our MEAP scores. Profundity works hand in hand with retelling and is also a part of our common language. Teachers who have successfully implemented Profundity in their classrooms also train other staff on this strategy. This is one example of how Brace-Lederle teachers are continuously sharing new strategies with colleagues.

Our staff continually receives on-going professional development. Our Reading Clinician, Mrs. Prosperi, is a trainer for MLPP and LEIRS, Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading. For example, Mrs. Prosperi trained all K-3 teachers in the use of the Developmental Reading Assessment. She is a valuable resource to our staff as we strive to meet the literacy needs of our students. Our school district has also provided all teachers with formal training on differentiated instruction. Since we believe that students learn in a variety of ways, the concept of differentiated instruction has been instrumental in how we teach to the whole child (Part IV). Teachers have also participated in teacher-led seminars for Freyer's Model, a strategy that helps students arrive at the understanding of themes.

Our commitment to professional growth is demonstrated in our own coursework and higher education. Through academic pursuits, many staff members investigate a plethora of topics such as integrating technology in the classroom, aligning curriculum with the state of Michigan's benchmarks, using a balanced approach to teaching geography in the middle school grades, to teaching reading recovery strategies to develop self-monitoring in lower elementary students. Our staff's own academic explorations positively impact student learning and further demonstrate how professional development is a top priority.

Staff members also report affiliations with an assortment of diverse professional organizations, expanding our professional expertise. Some of these professional organizations include but are not limited to the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, the African-American Critical Issues Network, the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the Michigan Education Association, and the American Speech and Hearing Association. Staff involvement in professional organizations keeps our perspectives fresh and innovative.

Brace-Lederle further maintains its fresh approach through its partnerships with student teaching programs at local universities – Wayne State University, Michigan State University, Eastern Michigan University, and the University of Michigan. As tenured teachers model best practices for student teachers, they are also refueled by the student teachers' zest for the profession. Collaboration between new and experienced teachers is another way we embrace professional development.

Our long-term professional development plan is to model our goal for students to become life-long learners as we continuously seek out professional opportunities ourselves. This has become an inherent practice of the Brace-Lederle professional community.

E3. How does the school tailor professional development and support to address the differences in career experience or professional responsibility?

Brace-Lederle is an exceptionally cohesive staff. We foster a family environment, assisting new and reassigned teachers as they assimilate into their new school setting. Some of the informal ways we address the needs of incoming staff are mentoring, grade level teaching teams, and support staff assistance. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor. A master teacher provides guidance and leadership, as the new teacher becomes familiar with curricular goals and objectives. Our support staff is also instrumental in assisting new staff. Each grade level team embraces new staff members and provides informal guidance and support. The speech pathologist and social worker regularly collaborate with new staff members.

Formal support is required by the administration, in the form of Individual Development Plans (IDP's). This plan provides an opportunity for the teacher and administrator to collaboratively plan that teacher's goals for the school year. This process helps the teacher focus on areas of improvement and provides a direction for professional growth in new areas.

Opportunities are also provided for our teachers to serve in leadership roles. The Galileo Teacher Leadership program helps prepare teachers for systemic changes in their building. Teachers in the Administrative Leadership Program, often fulfill administrative responsibilities in the absence of our administrators.

Professional development opportunities are expanded beyond our teaching staff. For example, our secretaries participated in an attendance workshop. At this workshop they were all trained on the new computerized attendance program used in our school district. During the district's professional development days, custodians, cooks, bus drivers, paraprofessionals and other support staff, attend workshops that support their job assignments. Professional development opportunities such as this empower our staff with the confidence necessary to effectively carry out the duties and responsibilities we have been entrusted with.

E4. How does the school use the processes and results of student assessment, staff evaluation, and school review to support professional growth? How has teacher professional development improved teaching and resulted in higher student achievement and success?

Our school values student assessment, staff evaluation, and school reviews. We view these as opportunities to support professional growth. Our building focuses on various means of formal and informal assessment. As a result of professional development student achievement and success has increased.

Our school staff engages in formal pre and post evaluations. The teacher meets with the administrator during the pre-evaluation process. Teachers are apprised of the date, time, and expectations of the evaluation process. After the observation, the teacher has an opportunity to collaborate with the administrator as constructive comments are shared. In cases where a weakness may be detected, strategies are implemented to support the teacher. The strategies could include professional development opportunities or partnerships with teachers who have demonstrated strengths in that area. To ensure teacher success, a plan of assistance may be implemented.

Professional development is an ongoing strategy that we exercise to produce high performing teachers. It empowers us to continuously meet the needs of our student population. We thrive on professional training as it allows us to grow and meet the needs of our students academically, socially, and personally. Professional development is a valuable tool enriching our teaching experiences and enhancing our growth as professionals. The impact of our professional development experiences is shown in a multitude of ways. Our improved teaching skills are evident as our MEAP scores are consistently improving.

Our school recognizes excellent teaching in a variety of manners. Our teachers often develop workshops and seminars in an effort to share information and assist in teacher development. They are invited to provide professional development for the district and county, as well as our Brace-Lederle community. Teachers are recognized for their excellence as they serve as a mentor for student teachers. The teachers in our building were recognized as excellent teachers by our district through nomination as recipients of the distinguished service award during the Founder's Day ceremony. In addition, our school was considered to be a model-teaching environment. Administrators from our district came to our school and observed teachers in action. They took the information back to their schools to share with their staffs. We continue a tradition of being highly qualified contributors as our staff is consistently invited to serve on state, county, district, and school committees.

F. Leadership and Educational Vitality

F1. How does the leadership move the school toward its vision/mission? How is the instructional leadership role defined and implemented? How are the resources aligned with goals?

Our principal, Mr. Horn, personifies true leadership in his steadfast commitment to the Brace-Lederle community. His philosophy as an administrator is to support the efforts of his staff and to lead by example. He models the leadership qualities he wants to see exemplified in his staff. This visionary form of leadership generates enthusiasm, creativity, and a broad base of support. This creates and promotes authentic and loyal service from staff, while meeting the needs of our students. Through our professional development workshops, grade level meetings, common planning, staff meetings, "Bump and Grow", and professional development retreat, the administration and staff are able to understand a clearly defined school vision/mission.

Our school is fortunate to have an assistant principal who shares the same team vision/mission. He is instrumental in helping the principal run the day-to-day operations of the school, provide support to the staff, and serves as a liaison between staff and our parents and students. His charge is to offer support to the teaching staff to promote positive expectations and high student achievement. Our administrative team's approach is based on team building and encourages shared ownership, responsibility, and teacher commitment to our vision/mission.

Brace-Lederle School has a team of curriculum coordinators (language arts, math, social studies, science) and a MEAP (Michigan Education Assessment Program) coordinator who meet regularly with administration to address varying school issues, make curriculum budget decisions for the school, and assist teachers with concerns. To further enhance a shared vision among staff, our principal helps to create an atmosphere conducive to positive staff interaction. He fosters camaraderie, through in-school social events such as student/staff competitive sport activities, professional development retreats, and staff social events throughout the year. As a result, teachers assume leadership roles and work as collaborative team members. The school atmosphere promotes creative solutions, problem solving, and positively impacts satisfaction and performance. Brace-Lederle's phenomenal leadership creates an environment that is nurturing, cooperative, creative, and productive, thus actualizing our vision/mission.

F2. How does the school engage its internal and external stakeholders in leadership and decision-making? What is the relationship between the principal and stakeholders?

The entire staff engages in meaningful dialogue to develop, re-evaluate, and extend the basic premise of our beliefs and the values model of the school. The principal encourages his staff to be an integral part of the decision-making process. This is evidenced by his procedure for hiring new teachers through a team of grade level and special subject teachers. At a variety of levels, teachers are encouraged to move the school toward its vision/mission by developing programs and making decisions about curriculum enhancement, professional development, internal school budget considerations, and fund allocations. Our principal empowers teachers to be innovative and productive instructional collaborative leaders.

At Brace-Lederle, we have a mutually supportive relationship with the stakeholders including parents, community agencies, and businesses. Our individual and collective parent link is vital to the survival of our school. The Parent Teacher Association (PIA) and the school, work together to foster programs that encourage parental involvement. The PIA embraces the mission statement of the school and works with the staff to support the school.

The linkages forged with the business community in our area are invaluable resources to our building. This is evidenced through the relationship with the Michigan First Credit Union banking institution, our business-community link for career day, and our service learning project partnerships.

The key stakeholders, our students, have a voice in the formulation of the school's vision, goals, and the priorities of everyday school life. Students assume leadership roles through various elective classes or after-school activities such as peer mediators, service learning workers, community helpers, spirit club membership, student-led banking program, student monitors, male and female mentors, student council, and teacher assistants. As a result, students take increased ownership and pride, both in the jobs they perform and contributions they make to their fellow classmates and their school community at large.

F3. What kind of participatory school improvement process operates at the school? How did the school prepare its Self-Assessment for the Blue Ribbon Schools Program and how did this initiative relate to other school improvement and planning efforts?

As stated in our previous application for the Blue Ribbon School Program in 1996-1997, Brace-Lederle was accredited by the North Central Association (NCA) in 1998-1999 and 2003-2004 and chosen as one of fifty schools in the state to be a part of the Michigan Accreditation Program (MAP). Since that time we have received the National Exemplary School Award (1997), the Golden Apple Award (2000), and met the requirements for Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as prescribed by the No Child Left Behind mandate. Our successes are generated by high-performance from the entire Brace-Lederle team and are largely due to effective planning based on our school's vision/mission. The staff regularly engages in professional conversation with colleagues, formally and informally, to promote a culture of professional inquiry, which strengthens knowledge and skills. Our school improvement plan is an on-going process. It is comprehensive and provides a framework from which we operate. The school improvement plan provides the blueprint for everything we work to achieve and breeds success because the entire staff takes ownership and responsibility for its implementation.

F4. How does the school leadership use the most current information about education to promote continuous improvement in the school? How does such evidence influence decision-making?

Sharing knowledge is a cornerstone of the Brace-Lederle culture. It is through an open exchange of information that school leaders embrace an ongoing, professional dialogue that serves to build bridges, scaffold new learning, and continue the flow of effective teaching instruction. Curriculum coordinators are content area leaders who support the school improvement plan that embodies a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. They are advocates for change as they share current research on best practice with respect to reading, writing, social sciences, mathematics, and science. Inherent in that research is the push to develop interdisciplinary approaches to the learning structure.

Teacher leaders in every grade level serve as mentors to novice teachers. They model teaching strategies and share the most current instructional approaches to move beyond teaching a basic skills curriculum. In this way, they encourage teachers to spend more time teaching for meaning across subject areas. Our goal is to help our students understand the conceptual framework that lies behind content.

As an author of modules in MLPP 3-5 and Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading (LETRS) the reading clinician shares the most current research on reading, writing, and comprehension strategy instruction in the content areas. The essential aspects of the research of Lev Vygotsky, Eric Jensen, Michael Pressley, P. David Pearson, Richard Allington and other prominent researchers provide the foundational approach of the reading clinician's approach to offering interventions, accommodations, and professional development. The principal offers support as he encourages and accommodates professional development opportunities.

F5. Reflecting on the last five years, what conditions or changes have contributed most to the overall success of the school?

Although there have been important changes in the school, we at Brace-Lederle have embraced the district mandated re-alignments, and viewed them as opportunities to become change-agents, creatively capitalizing on our greatest assets, rather than doing business as usual. We have undergone numerous changes in the structure of our district and in our own building. We lost four Special Education classes and gained the middle school component. Brace-Lederle has since changed its configurative structure from a K-5 elementary school to a K-8 magnet school. In addition, we offer a rich K-8 world language program. Communication arts/writing/technology courses are offered to grades 6-8 to enhance their computer technology course work. The principal was instrumental in implementing several other programs in our building, which improved overall student performance and enhanced teacher growth. Some of the programs include: team teaching, after-school tutoring and enrichment, "looping", common planning time for each grade level, multi-grade teacher collaboration, "Bump n' Grow", and team interviews, and the B-L School Collaborative Team Conference (B-L Professional Development Retreat). We continue to meet standards set for excellence through local, state and federal accreditation programs such as the North Central Association of Accreditation of Colleges and Schools (NCA), National Exemplary School Award (1996 - 1997), the Michigan Blue Ribbon Award (1996-1997 school year) and the Golden Apple Award (2000).

F6. How has the school integrated technology to improve management and program efficiency and effectiveness?

Our school has integrated technology to improve building management. Our building principal leads by example as he communicates via Email. The staff also uses the Email system to collaborate and share common planning notes on a daily basis. Our entire staff uses a system of technology called "SASI" to record and document attendance and personal data on all of our students. In addition, the effective management of our building is also enhanced by the use of televisions and VCR's which broadcast pertinent information.

Teachers implement the most innovative computer technology ideas into our curriculum. These techniques are then shared and taught to our students, who demonstrate technical savvy via Power Point presentations and Internet research. This integrated technology improves the teacher's management of subject area needs and enhances our use of operational systems.

Many important decisions are enhanced by our use of technology. We use the computer to analyze data about the school and student performance. For example, mygradebook.com is utilized to effectively communicate with parents about students' current progress. Computerized report cards at the middle school level and progress reports are resources that enable the school to effectively communicate the educational needs of the students. Email is frequently used to follow up with any parent concerns. Technology is a critical management tool.

middle school level and progress reports are resources that enable the school to effectively communicate the educational needs of the students. Email is frequently used to follow up with any parent concerns. Technology is a critical management tool.

F7. What are the major educational challenges the school must face over the next five years, and how does the school plan to address them?

The major educational challenge our school will face over the next five years is that of maintaining high educational standards and student success despite changing demographic factors. As a result of our magnet school status and open-school policies our students are drawn from an increasingly diverse community.

Meeting the needs of students/families who may have social/economic challenges will require the involvement of all staff, parents students and community resources in employment of creative and innovative strategies to increase student motivation, parent involvement and student success.

Our commitment is to continue to involve all staff, parents, and community resources in the employment of creative and innovative strategies that foster student success despite changing social-economic conditions. Our comprehensive strategies include Parenting University (Southfield's innovative parent education program), Headstart /Preschool Referrals (screening four year olds at risk), Kindergarten Round-ups (parent educational/orientation – handouts), After school programs (Title I), After school tutoring (city subsidized tutoring program), MEAP tutoring, male and female mentoring, new city state of the art public library, literacy programs (Dr. Seuss School Reading Month Program), Southfield Reads (city-wide reading program), Battle of the Books Reading Challenge, Drop Everything and Read Program (D.E.A.R), School wide, city-wide, and state-wide public oratorical contests such as The Optimist Oratorical Contest, School Attuned (Mel Levine Attuning Students – regular education individualized intervention plans), specialized reading programs (i.e Lindamood's visualizing and verbalizing for language comprehension and thinking and language), Young Authors and Science Fair with family suppers, PTA initiatives (room mothers, grandparents day, career day), and fine arts and performing arts programs (band, orchestra, choral music, talent shows, foreign language, and diversity cultural programs with parent participation and support).

G. School, Family, and Community Partnerships

G1. What are the goals and priorities of the school, family, and community partnership? How have the school and community both improved as a result of these partnerships and how did the school measure the improvements?

Brace-Lederle's ultimate goal is to include parental and community input to enrich our academic program. In an effort to meet and exceed state standards and benchmarks, one of our goals is to achieve academic success. During our professional development retreat and ongoing workshops the staff dialogued and established a list of needs to direct us in achieving our goals.

Some specific examples of activities conducted in collaboration with the community are our partnerships with the Michigan First Credit Union, Southfield Reads!, PTA, D.A.R.E., Service Learning, the Pizza Hut Book-It Program, our Youth Art Month connection with Wendy's, and our ties with Providence Hospital. The measure of success of these programs is demonstrated by our positive relationships with the community, as noted by the passage of our millage. Success is also demonstrated by the high academic achievement of our students.

Our partnership with the Michigan First Credit Union is a perfect example. This partnership was established because it directly corresponds with our math curriculum, and it fosters an understanding of money. The students, along with a teacher and bank advisors, operate the bank on school premises. The children are able to tend to their banking needs both here and at the actual banking facility. The success

of this program is measured by annual increases in students who have opened accounts and the amount of funds in these accounts.

Southfield Reads! has been another successful community campaign for us. During this project, guest speakers such as judges from the Southfield District Court and members of the Detroit Shock read to our children. In turn, Brace-Lederle was consistently the top school in the district for the most books read according to our district's website.

Our PTA is another community partner. We have one of the largest PTA's in the district. The PTA sponsors our annual fundraisers, Holiday Gift Shop, and many field trips. In addition, the PTA has supported our building beautification goals and is a major contributor to funding of many successful extra-curricular programs. The success of our PTA can be measured in fundraising profits and increases in annual membership.

We also have valued partnerships with local restaurants. During Youth Art Month, our students' artwork is displayed at the area Wendy's restaurants. Our students are also actively involved in the Pizza Hut Book-It Program.

Service learning has created a new genre of learning for our students while benefiting our community. Service learning infuses community service into the curriculum. Our students are engaged and highly motivated, as service learning develops a sense of pride and ownership.

G2. How does the school involve families in their children's education?

We believe that parents play an integral role in their child's education. We share our open-door philosophy with our parents on the first day of school. From day one, we welcome parents. At Open House/Curriculum Night parents are once again invited to meet staff and familiarize themselves with the curriculum. At that time we strongly encourage parents to sign up for parent-teacher conferences. We hold conferences in both fall and spring to communicate both successes and concerns.

Other examples of parent partnerships that are unique to Brace-Lederle are Parent Visitation Day and Career Day. On Parent Visitation Day parents are invited to spend the entire day to get a perspective on their child's day, following the same schedule as their student, except for lunch. At lunch, administration provides parents with a catered meal. Career Day is an occasion for us to instill the values of higher education in our students and present them with the opportunities that await them in their future. (Part V. B. 1)

G. 2. How does the school involve families in their children's education?

We are diligent in our efforts to guarantee two-way communication between school and home. Before the school year begins an upcoming calendar is sent home, as is a monthly school-wide newsletter. In addition, many teachers send home weekly newsletters regarding classroom affairs. Important events are always posted on the marquis in front of the building. Information about the school is also made available during broadcasts on the local cable station.

Parent feedback is welcomed at parent-teacher conferences. Progress reports and report cards are sent home each card marking informing parents of their children's progress. Many teachers utilize websites to post information for parents, who have the opportunity to respond. Other avenues for parents to communicate with staff are notes, Email, voicemail, and by telephone.

Brace-Lederle consistently enlists the assistance of our parents. Our parents are regularly asked to chaperone field trips and serve as room parents. Our parents are very dependable in assisting behind the scenes with our student programs such as the Diversity Program and the winter and spring concerts and our Annual Carnival. In addition, our parents are valued supporters of our school-wide young authors and science fair night.

Our teachers provide homework enrichment assignments that directly correlate to studies that are taking place in the classroom. Many times this homework is in direct response to parents' requests for reinforcement at home. Our math series, which is Everyday Math, lends itself to this practice by

including "home links" which are extensions of the day's lesson. Some teachers send home monthly calendars of activities that require parent involvement. This encourages parent-child interaction. Reading logs and research projects are activities that enlist other parent involvement.

We strive to involve parents in all areas of decision-making in regards to their student. One way we incorporate parents is in student staffings. When a teacher identifies a student in need of intervention strategies and services, a meeting is held. The parents are involved in the entire process because they must approve all strategies and services suggested at the meeting.

Other methods of parental involvement in decision-making are through conferences, PTA, and Parenting University. These provide opportunities for dialogue and feedback between parents and teachers. Informed parents are better prepared to make decisions about their children's needs.

G3. How does the school support the needs and concerns of families?

At Brace-Lederle we determine the needs and concerns for our families by the use of staff referrals. Teachers are responsible for identifying children who are experiencing difficulties in the classroom. If the problem is not resolved a staffing is scheduled. A staffing is a team of ancillary personnel (general education teacher, social worker, school psychologist, learning resource teacher, school counselor, and administrator) assembled to determine whether a child is in need of supportive services to create greater success in his/her educational career. The ancillary team meets with the parents of the student to assist in creating a support system that will meet the student's needs. Our social worker, school psychologist, and counselor may refer families requiring comprehensive counseling to outside agencies.

We provide health services to our students. Vision and hearing screenings are available to our elementary students. We have a visiting school nurse who provides medical consultation as needed. Our middle school students receive health education, which is in alignment with our science curriculum. We have staff members who have been certified through Oakland Schools to teach health education and reproductive health.

Brace-Lederle has free and reduced breakfast and lunch program for those that qualify, late buses provide transportation for students participating in after-school activities, before and after school latchkey is available for a nominal fee, and grade level parent meetings address parental concerns.

In addition to the aforementioned support service, we also provide holiday gift baskets, hats, gloves, coats and other clothing items to underprivileged students. All staff and students participate in a canned food drive that directly benefits our families.

G4. How are educational resources in the school and the community used to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families?

We provide a variety of educational resources in the school and community to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families. Learning beyond the school premises allows parents and other community members to be active participants in our students' learning. Our school has a rich history of supporting opportunities for extended learning. Some of these opportunities include: The Cranbrook Museum of Science, Greenfield Village, Festival of Cultures, Hands on Science Museum, Henry Ford Museum, Youth Theater, Camp Tamarack, Southfield Public Library, YMCA, African American History Museum, Michigan First Credit Union, Foreign Teacher Exchange, and the Rain Forest Café.

In our efforts to give back to the community and demonstrate our ethics in higher learning, we have formed a partnership with local universities. Each semester we host approximately fifteen student teachers across grade levels. We provide student teachers with the opportunity to observe, assist, and emulate highly qualified teachers. At the same time, cooperating teachers gain a fresh perspective on current teaching techniques. Hosting student teachers, provides us with a triangular win-win-win situation.

the United Kingdom. This program allows young teachers be exposed to American teaching pedagogy. This program fosters beneficial alliances that bridge cultural gaps. They spend one month shadowing our staff members, immerse themselves in our culture, and view our best teaching practices. They teach lessons, attend all staff meetings, and visit other schools within the district. As a closure to their departure they organize a culminating activity that brings together a wide range of diverse activities. Our teachers also visit their countries and bring back a wealth of knowledge to share with our staff and students. Our Language Arts coordinator has been a Foreign exchange teacher and promoted this valuable program for many years.

Our Brace-Lederle K-8 World Language Magnet School extends learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families through our various cultural events. Our students participate in a Mexican and German dinner to demonstrate how Christmas is celebrated in those countries. Our La Fiesta Latina program is a program through which our students have the opportunity to participate in a Hispanic Festival. This festival focuses on the history of Spanish speaking countries. We annually participate in a Mardi Gras/Carnaval. Our programs are recorded for viewing on our local cable channel. These spectacular programs merge with other curriculum activities, such as our diversity program. Their daytime and evening performances result in standing room only, with attendance by family, friends, and community dignitaries.

The Southfield Public Library is an educational resource within the community that is utilized for extended learning. Students, teachers, and families in our diverse K-8 building take advantage of the wonderful programs that the library has to offer. Some of the extended programs the library has to offer are: story times, family theater series, school-age programs, battle of the books, author focus, planetarium, and national children's book week. Our school library/media specialist promotes educational programs that are offered at the library by passing out weekly, monthly, and yearly schedules of youth programs. She also collects and records data by conducting surveys, so she can work in conjunction with the Southfield Public Library. Survey feedback allows Southfield Public Library to consider suggestions from our students for future programs.

H. Indicators of Academic Success

H1. What is the school's overall approach to assessment? How do the methods align with educational vision/mission and curriculum? What questions about assessment is the school currently addressing?

Our approach is grounded in the notion that assessment drives instruction. In an attempt to attend to individual children, our observations and multiple assessments guide us as they provide feedback about student achievement from which to base our instruction. Observations are particularly critical during the formative phases of learning reading, writing, and mathematics. We understand that reading involves communications expressed in language, knowing about conventions used in printed language, visual patterns including letters/blends/syllables/words and the processing of that information. In addition, we address reading from the premise that a reader uses meaning, sentence structure and the less reliable aspect of letter-sound relationships. Given this understanding, our K - 3 teachers use the MLPP K-3 as an assessment tool to guide their instruction. Fundamental to this approach, is that this system provides a means by which teachers are able to document and explain a child's literacy growth and performance levels. These assessments allow a teacher to "dig deeper" into the understandings children develop as they learn strategic in the reading and writing process. This system is built on the cycle of observation, assessment, analysis, planning, and teaching. As we move to grades 3-5, the same instructional cycle is followed. Inherent in that system are instructional strategies and assessments used to further guide the teacher in the development of an instructional plan for his/her students. In addition to these assessments, our students are assessed in mathematics and reading using the California Achievement Test in grades 2-8. Our 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th grade students are assessed yearly by the MEAP. Student artwork, conversations and performances in Spanish, pieces of writing, science projects, cultural environments

such as a student created African village, musical programs and recitals, and physical fitness tests speak to the performance assessments that are integral components of our school wide assessment program.

The MEAP and MLPP assessments are aligned with the Michigan Standards and Benchmarks grade level content expectations. This in turn is aligned with our language arts, social studies, science and math curricula. This coincides with our mission/vision of promoting academic, social and personal growth.

The school is currently addressing the notion that additional assessments need to be instituted in the 6-8 grade levels. In order to address this issue, it is our intent to have content area teachers receive professional development in grades 6-8 in MiClass, Michigan's Content Literacy Assessments, Standards and Strategies, as we work toward enabling our students to learn to think like authors, mathematicians, historians, and scientists. This will provide the bridge from K-5 with respect to congruence, as it is our intent to place emphasis on making thinking visible, mediating instruction, constructing meaning, and using ongoing assessment to guide instructional decisions.

H2. How does the school use assessment results to understand and improve student and school performance? How are data used to influence decision-making?

Our instruction is data driven as we strive to empower our teachers to be decision makers and use a differentiated approach to instruction. Therefore, we utilize our assessments to make informed decisions as it relates to the effectiveness of our teaching strategies and the necessary professional development to bolster areas of need. As a team, we disaggregate our assessment data, and begin to address areas that are in need of improvement as well as areas of strength.

Having discovered an inadequate opportunity for children to interact with expository text in a meaningful fashion, teachers began incorporating more informational text in their daily lessons. Along with this, teachers focused on appropriate comprehension strategy instruction. We also discovered that the areas of number sense, probability, and analytical thinking were areas of weakness in mathematics instruction. In an effort to improve, teachers began to use writing as a vehicle to assist students in synthesizing mathematical concepts.

H3. What assessment data are communicated to students, parents, and the community? What are the purposes of these communications? How does the school ensure that these stakeholders understand the standards for judgment and the meaning of the data?

It is our goal to keep lines of communication open and vibrant with all of our constituents. In this way, all members are able to enjoy our successes and feel part of the Brace-Lederle family. We encourage our parents to maintain close contact with the teachers so they are fully aware of their child's progress. We begin the school year with a Curriculum Night. Families meet our staff and teachers share an overview of classroom academic and behavioral expectations. In addition, our instructional practices and assessments are shared so parents are fully aware of the ways in which we not only address the educational process of their child, but the way in which we measure their child's progress during the school year. We send home progress reports four times a year and report cards go home four times a year as well. On an individual basis, teachers formally communicate with parents to a greater extent as needed. Our teachers take part in parent/teacher conferences twice yearly. Our teachers communicate in less formal ways throughout the school year as well, via phone calls, daily planners, and email. Our parents are encouraged to visit classrooms throughout the year.

The Brace-Lederle Newsletter goes home on a monthly basis. This is an additional form of communication to keep parents abreast of what is happening on a school-wide level. There is also an opportunity for parents to review MEAP scores on the district website.

A clear understanding of data ensures credibility and documents our growth as a learning community.

H4. What standardized norm-referenced tests developed on the national, state, or district level has the school given in the last five years?

Brace-Lederle teachers administered the California Achievement Test in grades 1-8 in the areas of reading and mathematics. As this was the first year the test was administered to the entire population within those grade levels, comparisons of results are not available at this time. In addition, students are assessed using the MEAP. This testing is administered to students in language arts and mathematics in fourth and seventh grade, while fifth and eighth grade students are assessed in science and social studies.

H5. What are the results from the MEAP for the last five years?

The students of Brace-Lederle traditionally score higher than other schools in our district, and score equal to or greater than the state average on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP). Because of our high achievement, our school was awarded the Golden Apple Award. To qualify for that award a school must have 50 or more students enrolled and must have at least 90% of their students take the MEAP tests and meet the following criteria: Composite student scores for Mathematics, Science, Reading and Writing (in 4th and 5th grades) must have increased by at least 60 points over the past three academic years; or the students' test scores must be among the highest in the state for that year. Brace-Lederle was awarded the Golden Apple for having increased scores from 1998-2000. (See Appendix 2)

H6. What alternative assessments of student performance does the school use?

The teachers of Brace-Lederle use a plethora of alternative assessments to determine student performance. We understand that to obtain a comprehensive picture of a learner's strengths and weaknesses, many types of assessments offer a more authentic description. The **cloze procedure** is used to determine if readers are using language cues such as semantics and syntactics in order to monitor how students make predictions about the words they are reading. **Holistic scoring of writing**, which is the practice of reading a piece of writing and assigning a numerical rating based on a pre-determined criteria, is used across grade levels. The **K-W-L strategy** is a helpful way to discover what learners know about a topic before classroom study of that topic begins. This is an excellent tool used in math, science, social science, as well as language arts. This offers invaluable information to the classroom teacher as she/he plans her instructional units. Many of our teachers believe that we can learn a great deal upon examination of daily work and this is done via **portfolio assessments**. This is used to evaluate growth over time. Another tool that demonstrates growth over time is our **pre and post-test** procedure, used in all four disciplines. We continue to look for ways to individualize our instruction and gain a deeper understanding of our learners. Many teachers utilize the **reading conference** to achieve this goal. As we encourage and nurture comprehension of stories our students read, **retellings and the Narrative and Expository Profundity Scales** offer a window into the understanding our children have of stories they have read. **Retrospective Miscue Analysis** is a tool incorporated in the assessments used by the Reading Clinician. Within this process, the teacher and student are able to identify, review, and analyze a student's oral reading miscues. **Running records** is a tool that allows us to become highly skilled observers of how our students behave as readers. They are an observational/analytical system of reflecting what occurs as a reader reads in terms of strategies and cueing systems. **Think alouds** provide the teacher with information about how well the reader is able to enlist metacomprehension strategies — how the reader is monitoring the creation of meaning, predicting, confirming and rejecting predictions, using prior knowledge, rereading, and visualizing. Another tool we use in our building to improve student performance is the use of exit tests. These tests are given in math, science, social science, and language arts at all grade levels. This allows us to see if students are meeting expectations and to determine the skills they have acquired over the year. As a culminating activity at the end of the year our students are required to submit a **science fair project**. This services as an opportunity for students to

demonstrate their knowledge of the scientific process. Each of these tools offers insights into our students and provides valuable information as we seek to inform our instruction in the most effective ways possible.

H7. What are the data for the past five years in the following areas that serve as quantitative indicators of the school climate and engagement?

Both staff and students want to be content in the school environment. Brace-Lederle school fosters a friendly, caring atmosphere where the staff work comfortably with colleagues, in a safe and caring environment. It is this type of surrounding that contributes to low absenteeism in our building. We recognize that good teacher attendance provides a positive model for students. It is a general belief and practice of the Brace-Lederle staff, to service our students in a consistent manner and ongoing basis which is paramount in attaining high performance from our students. We also recognize that teachers who support their colleagues, through collaborative efforts such as teaming, common planning, and grade meetings are consistent in their participation (i.e. good attendance) and convey high quality instruction to their students and thereby, creating long term benefits to the entire Brace-Lederle community. B-L has maintained a low percentage of absences over the years. Currently, our district does not report data on teacher-absenteeism. It is therefore is not available at this time.

H8. Which awards received by the school, staff, or students are most indicative of school success?

- Golden Apple Award for greatest improvement in MEAP scores, 2000
- Optimist Club of Southfield-Lathrup International Oratorical Contest Honorable Mention, Jessica Humphries, Desheria Holiday, 2002, and Kwaku Oseibonsu, Samuel Hartfield, Jessica Gaddis, Siabahn Jones, 2004
- Southfield Reads!, Jordan Deane, 2003
- Michigan First Credit Union School Award, for the most active membership and collecting the most funds, 2003
- Michigan Exemplary Physical Education Teacher, Connie Joseph, 2004
- Founder's Day Award, Sharon Lewis, 2003, Eboni White, 2004
- City of Southfield Turnaround Award, Darius Freeman, 2004
- Principal's Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement, 2004

Part VI. PREVIOUSLY RECOGNIZED SCHOOLS

11. What major changes and improvements have taken place since the school was last recognized?

Brace-Lederle has undergone major changes and improvements in our organizational structure since we were recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 1996-1997. The entire school has been altered dramatically in a three year transition from a K-5 elementary school to a K-8 World Languages School. We are the only school of this type in our district. We offer a nurturing, caring environment to students from Kindergarten through the middle school grades. In the three years since the inception of this configuration, Brace-Lederle has increased its population from 600 to approximately 800 students.

Our family-type atmosphere is further enhanced by our engagement in the looping process through which students and teachers benefit from continuity of relationships and learning environments.

Team building programs such as common planning, cross grade level curriculum teams, and Bump 'N' Grow, as well as Kindergarten K-Club were innovative strategies implemented in the past five years to fulfill our school vision/mission and promote student success. (F.4,F.5,F.6)

12. Has the administration or staff had any interactions with other schools to share some of the successful strategies and practices? How has the staff been involved in leadership or training programs beyond the school to disseminate practices and programs?

Our staff has had many opportunities to share successful strategies and practices with other schools in our district, as well as schools in Oakland county and counties in the surrounding metropolitan area. Examples include workshops on developing comprehension skill strategy instruction and the use of Narrative and Expository Profundity Scales. Instruction for classroom teachers has also been offered on district professional development days. This includes incorporating best practices in grades 3-5, a component of MLPP 3-5. This is in its initial stages of district wide implementation and professional development has just begun.

Our principal has invited administrators from all elementary schools to visit our classrooms and observe our teachers in action as they implement our new and effective strategies. He has also shared our success with Bump 'N' Grow at district principal meetings. Our staff retreat is typically held in conjunction with another building in our district. During that time, we discuss and share strategies that have lead to our success. Two of our staff members have been members of the Galileo Leadership Consortium. Through that venue, they have disseminated ideas related to our successful programs to a membership consisting of educators from the greater metropolitan Detroit area and surrounding suburbs.

APPENDIX I

Code of Conduct Violations

Incidents	2002-2003	2003-2004
Class Disruption	8	22
Insubordination	34	12
Tardiness	0	0
Weapon	2	2
Vandalism	3	2
Total Number of Incidents	47	38

*Our Code of Conduct reporting system did not begin until the 2002-2003 school year. Therefore, we are unable to report data prior the 2002-2003 school year.

APPENDIX 2

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 4

Test: Reading

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	65	80	44	62	78
Percent Tested	100%	92%	98%	95%	97%
Number Excluded	0	6	3	5	4
Percent Excluded	0%	8%	2%	5%	3%
Percent Satisfactory	91%	70%	88.6%	88.7%	92.3%
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	84%	62%	76%	73.9%	66.5%
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	80%	58%	60%	65%	62%

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 4
Test: Math
Original Publication year: 1989
Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	65	71	62	80	78
Percent Tested	100%	96%	98%	98%	95%
Number Excluded	0	3	1	1	4
Percent Excluded	0%	4%	2%	2%	5%
Percent Satisfactory	88%	86%	74.2%	95%	93.6%
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	79%	74%	77.3%	81.3%	73.2%
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	73%	70%	62%	72%	70%

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 5

Test: Social Studies

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	94	75	73	62	70
Percent Tested	100%	95%	98%	98%	95%
Number Excluded	0	4	1	1	4
Percent Excluded	0%	5%	2%	2%	5%
Percent Satisfactory	31%	21.3%	51.4%	11.3%	12.1%
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	30%	5.1%	23.3%	19%	12.9%
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	31%	2.6%	17.5%	18.4%	17.0%

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 5

Test: Science

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	92	92	73	96	84
Percent Tested	100%	95%	98%	100%	95%
Number Excluded	0	4	1	0	4
Percent Excluded	0%	5%	2%	0%	5%
Percent Satisfactory	89%	88%	64.3%	67.5%	64.6%
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	76%	70%	40.3%	43.3%	27.7%
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	70%	70%	35%	38%	40%

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 5

Test: Writing

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	N/A	76	72	91	84
Percent Tested	N/A	95%	98%	98%	95%
Number Excluded	N/A	4	1	1	4
Percent Excluded	N/A	5%	2%	2%	5%
Percent Satisfactory	N/A	92.1%	95.7%	78%	72.7%
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	N/A	64.5%	72%	78.7%	57.3%
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	N/A	60%	70%	73%	65%

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 7

Test: Reading

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	92	95	*	*	*
Percent Tested	100%	100%	*	*	*
Number Excluded	0	0	*	*	*
Percent Excluded	0%	0%	*	*	*
Percent Satisfactory	85%	57.9%	*	*	*
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	61%	48%	*	*	*
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	61%	36%	*	*	*

* Indicates that grade level was not established at the time of the test.

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 7

Test: Writing

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	92	94	*	*	*
Percent Tested	100%	100%	*	*	*
Number Excluded	0	0	*	*	*
Percent Excluded	0%	0%	*	*	*
Percent Satisfactory	32%	46.8%	*	*	*
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	25%	51.4%	*	*	*
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	23%	66.2%	*	*	*

* Indicates that grade level was not established at the time of the test.

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 8

Test: Social Studies

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	98	*	*	*	*
Percent Tested	100%	*	*	*	*
Number Excluded	0	*	*	*	*
Percent Excluded	0%	*	*	*	*
Percent Satisfactory	13%	*	*	*	*
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	18%	*	*	*	*
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	12%	*	*	*	*

* Indicates that grade level was not established at the time of the test.

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 8

Test: Science

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	98	*	*	*	*
Percent Tested	100%	*	*	*	*
Number Excluded	0	*	*	*	*
Percent Excluded	0%	*	*	*	*
Percent Satisfactory	74%	*	*	*	*
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	62%	*	*	*	*
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	60%	*	*	*	*

* Indicates that grade level was not established at the time of the test.

Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

Grade: 8

Test: Mathematics

Original Publication year: 1989

Publisher: Michigan Department of Education

What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed? Special Education and LEP students were given the MEAP but not included in summary.

Scores reported as scaled scores and percent satisfactory

Year	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000
Testing Month	January	January	January	January	January
Number Tested	98	*	*	*	*
Percent Tested	100%	*	*	*	*
Number Excluded	0	*	*	*	*
Percent Excluded	0%	*	*	*	*
Percent Satisfactory	74%	*	*	*	*
District Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	68%	*	*	*	*
State Scores					
Percent Satisfactory	60%	*	*	*	*

* Indicates that grade level was not established at the time of the test.